

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## HB 2578

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As of February 25, 2016

**Title:** An act relating to job search requirements for unemployment compensation claimants.

**Brief Description:** Addressing job search requirements for unemployment compensation claimants.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Jenkins, Manweller, Gregerson, McCabe, G. Hunt, Tharinger, Rossetti and Zeiger.

**Brief History:** Passed House: 2/17/16, 57-40.

**Committee Activity:** Commerce & Labor: 2/24/16.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

**Staff:** Susan Jones (786-7404)

**Background:** The unemployment compensation system provides partial wage replacement benefits for workers who are unemployed through no fault of their own. An individual is eligible to receive unemployment benefits if he or she: (1) worked at least 680 hours in covered employment in his or her base year; (2) was separated from employment through no fault of his or her own or quit work for good cause; and (3) is able to work and is actively searching for suitable work.

For each week in which an individual files a claim for benefits, the individual must, at a minimum, make three contacts with employers or participate in three in-person job search activities at the local WorkSource office, or do any combination of three employer contacts or in-person job-search activities. WorkSource activities include workshops and training classes. After an individual has received five weeks of benefits, the individual must be able to provide evidence of his or her job search activity.

**Summary of Bill:** Job-search activity requirements are modified to allow approved in-person activities with a career counselor at an accredited institution of higher education and other methods of job-search activity as permitted by rule. At least three instances per week of any combination of employer contacts, WorkSource activities, higher education career counselor activities, or other activities permitted by rule satisfy the job-search requirement.

**Appropriation:** None.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect on July 3, 2016.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: This came from a constituent who said that she got more assistance with getting a job from her college career counselor. In addition, there was a workgroup that has been meeting that determined allowing job-search activity to include meeting with college career counselors was a best practice. This provides common sense flexibility to job-seekers.

OTHER: The amendment that was proposed in the House was good because there is a disconnect in the unemployment system with respect to providing evidence of the job-search activities during the first five weeks. The amendment would also help those looking for jobs to know they are doing it properly.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Representative Laurie Jinkins, Prime Sponsor; Joe Kendo, Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO.

OTHER: Bob Battles, AWB.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.